



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Statement on Parliamentary Elections in Kyrgyzstan**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Paul W. Jones  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 03, 2005

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States is pleased that parliamentary elections held this past Sunday in Kyrgyzstan were able to take place in a calm and orderly environment, and fully supports ODIHR's preliminary findings concerning their conduct.

This initial assessment notes some positive characteristics of the elections, such as modest improvements in the elections law, many genuinely competitive races, provision of free state media air-time to candidates, efforts to improve efficiency and transparency, and a well developed civil society.

At the same time, however, the report cites a number of substantial shortcomings, including widespread vote-buying, inaccurate voter lists, de-registration of candidates, restrictions on independent media, interference by some officials in the elections process, pressure on university staff and students to vote for a particular candidate, and a low level of candidate and voter confidence in Kyrgyz electoral and judicial institutions.

The United States remains committed to assisting Kyrgyzstan in meeting its election-related OSCE commitments. In that spirit, and with a view towards the October 2005 presidential elections, we urge Kyrgyzstan to take immediate steps to correct the deficiencies detailed in ODIHR's report in advance of the March 13 run-offs. We also urge the Government to investigate allegations of fraud and abuse promptly and transparently.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.